

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are currently pending in the application. Only claims 1 and 14 are in independent form.

Applicant wishes to express his appreciation for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representatives, Dr. Kenneth I. Kohn and Andrew M. Parial during a personal interview conducted on March 25, 2004. During the personal interview, the Lohrey, et al. patent was discussed vis-à-vis the pending claims and proposed further amendment to the claims were discussed in order to overcome the prior art. Applicant has amended the independent claims, claims 1 and 14, consistent with the discussions in order to overcome all grounds for rejection under the cited prior art.

Referring specifically to the Office Action, claims 1-6, 8-11 and 13-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent Number 4,803,348 to Lohrey, et al. The Office Action holds that the Lohrey, et al. patent teaches an automatic customer interface for services involving drop-off and pick-up. Within the customer interface facility is a general computer network with a central computer at a central processing plant. More specifically, the Lohrey, et al. patent discloses a system for automating a dry cleaning service. The service enables an individual to drop off their dry cleaning, indicate how many pieces of dry cleaning are being dropped off, and how the clothes should be cleaned. Alternative services that can utilize the Lohrey, et al. patent are shoe shine and repair services, film processing, clothing repairs and alterations, video rentals, and dry cleaning. The commonality between all of these services, as taught by the Lohrey, et al. patent, is that items are dropped off, information is obtained, and the people that service the items are also the people that handle the personal information, such as billing and the like. There is no disclosure of processing means for processing and selectively communicating service and personal information to different locations. In fact, the

services described in the Lohrey, et al. patent are all of the type where the service information and personal information are always handled by the same people.

In contradistinction, independent claims 1 and 14 are characterized by a system including processing means for processing and selectively communicating service information to a service station and personal information to a management station. As discussed during the personal interview, the Lohrey, et al. patent does not disclose such a processing means, nor does it require or suggest such. In fact, such a processing means is not at all needed for the services disclosed in the Lohrey, et al. patent. It is respectfully submitted that the processing means limitation in claim 1 and the step of initiating communication separately to a service station and to a management station as set forth in claim 14 are patentable over the cited Lohrey, et al. patent. Hence, it is respectfully submitted that the aforementioned independent claims are patentable over the cited prior art.

The remaining dependent claims are all ultimately dependent upon at least one of the independent claims discussed above. No prior art reference makes up for the deficiency that reference is applied against the independent claims, there is no prior art reference that discloses the characterizing limitations of the independent claims as discussed above. Hence, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art.

In conclusion, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee or credit any overpayment in connection with this communication to our Deposit Account No. 11-1449.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: April 2, 2004

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